



Information Bulletin

COUGAR AREA CLOSURE LIFTED IN BANFF NATIONAL PARK

BANFF, ALBERTA, May 30, 2013 – After an extensive week-long search, Parks Canada's wildlife specialists have concluded a thorough search of the area and have not located the cougar that was involved in the aggressive encounter nor any evidence of a carcass or other attractant that would require the area to remain closed. As a result, the closure, which was posted for that area, is no longer in effect.

Parks Canada Resource Conservation Officers have been assisted by a team of cougar hounds in searching the closed area looking for recent evidence of a cougar. In addition, Resource Conservation Officers placed motion sensitive cameras to detect activity throughout the day and night, and scoured the area for cougar scat and any sign of a carcass that the cougar may have been feeding on in the area. This thorough, week-long, investigation revealed no new evidence of recent cougar activity in the closed area.

The area closure was first implemented because, at approximately noon on Thursday, May 23, a lone male reported encountering a cougar near the town of Banff. During this incident the man was reportedly knocked to the ground by the cougar, protected himself by striking the cat with his skateboard, and escaped any injury. The initial anonymous report provided few details, so wildlife specialists posted an area warning as a precautionary measure and began a thorough investigation. Additional information provided on Saturday, May 25 by the man involved in the encounter, confirmed the location occurred within the town boundary. As a result of this information, and another report of a cougar stalking deer inside the residential area, the warning was elevated to an area closure to ensure safety and to allow search dogs and staff to work more effectively.

While the closure is no longer in effect, carnivores, including cougars, wolves and bears, use natural areas around the town of Banff throughout the year as both a travel corridor and an area to acquire vital food sources such as elk and deer. As always, park users should reduce the risk of wildlife encounters by travelling in a group, keeping dogs on a leash, carrying bear spray and refraining from wearing headphones while out on the trail.

Please report all carnivore sightings, and elk sightings in the town of Banff, immediately to Parks Canada's 24-hour Banff Dispatch by calling 403-762-1470.

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Information:

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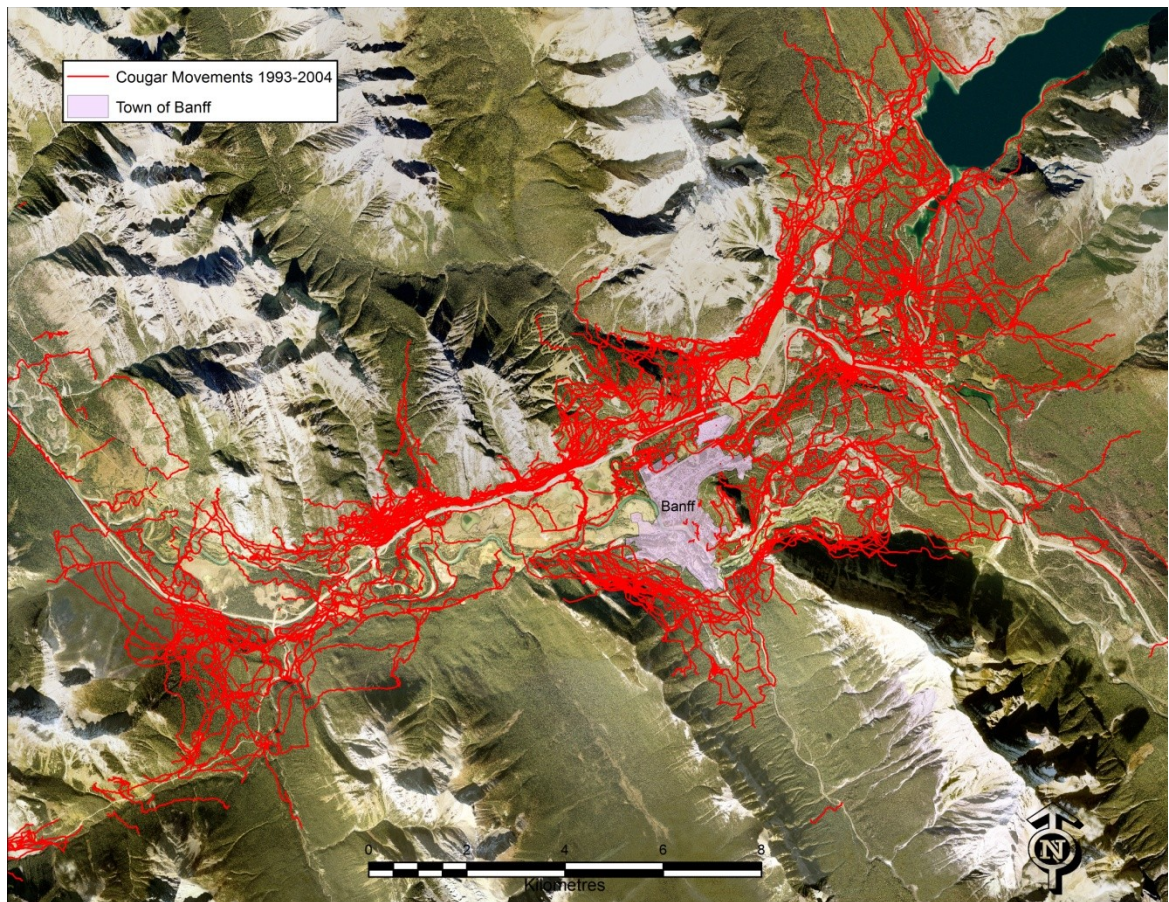


Figure 1 – Eleven years of wildlife corridor research, based on winter backtracking which is conducted approximately 10-15 times each winter. This map shows how effectively Parks Canada has restored wildlife corridors to allow wildlife to move safely through the valley bottom around the town of Banff. Given the significant use of these corridors, by cougars and other carnivores, it is easy to see that conflicts with humans are actually extremely rare.